Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore and University of Delhi, South Campus, will also be working for transfer of Beta Carotene genes to other Indica Rice varieties such as Pusa Basmati-I, Mahasuri and ASD-16.

Decline in land fertility by ground water contamination

†2515. SHRIKRIPAL RARMAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of hazards of contamination of ground water and decline in fertility of land, due to excessive use of chemicals, fertilisers and insecticides;

(b) if so, whether Government have made any survey to find out the regions where fertility of land is declining due to this and the extent thereof; and

(c) whether Government propose to take any action to prevent such a situation cropping up in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) The average consumption of fertilizers and pesticides in the country is only 92 kg/ha and 0.57 kg/ha (active ingredient), respectively during 2001 -02.This level of consumption is not considered to have hazardous effect on decline in fertility of land. No. systematic survey has been made to ascertain the hazards of contamination of ground water and decline in soil fertility due to excessive use of fertilisers in the country. However, there are few evidences of nitrate contamination in ground water under intensively cropped areas.

(c)The Government is promoting the soil test based balanced and integrated use of chemical fertilisers, organic manures and biofertiiisers and also integrated pest management practices. Government is also promoting organic farming through use of organic sources of nutrients like organic manures, rural/urban compost, green manures, bio-fertilisers and also use of mechanical/natural means of controlling weeds and pests including bio-oesticides and bio-agents.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

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